

# Creating Partnerships to Strengthen Community-Led Crisis Response

## Willamette Valley Crisis Care & TASC's Center for Health and Justice

Willamette Valley Crisis Care (WVCC), founded by former CAHOOTS crisis workers, has partnered with TASC's Center for Health and Justice (CHJ), a nationally recognized leader in deflection, to help jurisdictions and communities **design, launch, and strengthen community responder deflection** programs.

Together, CHJ and WVCC help communities build **sustainable, civilian-led, health-centered responses** that reduce pressure on law enforcement, open the door to timely care, and **strengthen both public safety outcomes and community trust**.

### WHAT WE DO

With a combined experience of over sixty years, CHJ and WVCC provide **comprehensive training and technical assistance (TTA)**, including evidence-based Deflection Solutions Action Planning (DSAP)©, resource mapping, program implementation support, and the development of manuals, curricula, and protocols.

Our work helps jurisdictions:

- **Divert** calls for service, freeing up police and first responder time
- **Deflect** street encounters, providing low-threshold connections to treatment
- **Reduce** unnecessary emergency service utilization
- **Save** money and **improve** resource efficiency
- **Build** sustainable, community-rooted crisis response systems



### CONTACT US

**CHJ:** Hope Fiori, [hfiori@tasc.org](mailto:hfiori@tasc.org)

**WVCC:** [info@willamettevalleycrisiscare.org](mailto:info@willamettevalleycrisiscare.org)

## WHAT IS COMMUNITY RESPONSE?

Community response, one of the six pathways of deflection, is a **civilian-led model focused on early intervention and prevention**. Integrated with 911, community responders handle calls that do not require police, preventing escalation and addressing behavioral health and social needs. These teams now respond to a wide range of issues, including public disorder, mental health crises, substance use, and other social determinants of health.

Functioning as a city's "nervous system," **community responders link public safety, health, and social supports**. They strengthen existing resources, expand services through diverse funding, and operate through 911 while remaining independent from law enforcement. By providing **holistic, on-scene care**, they build trust and help cities send the right responders to the right situations.

Sometimes described as mobile crisis response, this related but distinct model can **safely handle a broad spectrum of calls**—not only mental health—while reducing arrests, preventing future incidents, and building trust with residents. Evidence shows it is **highly cost-effective, improves access to medical care, and does not compromise public safety**.

## WHO WE ARE

### Willamette Valley Crisis Care (WVCC)

Founded in 2025 by former CAHOOTS crisis workers, WVCC trains communities to deliver non-coercive, trauma-informed, integrated health response through mobile teams dispatched via 911. Its medic-and-crisis-worker model provides consent-based care, de-escalation, suicide risk assessment, low-acuity medical support, overdose prevention, and connections to shelter, primary care, treatment, counseling, and other services. Functioning as a city's "nervous system," WVCC weaves together public safety, health, and social supports—expanding solutions beyond jails and hospitals and strengthening community resilience.

### TASC's Center for Health and Justice (CHJ)

CHJ brings national expertise at the intersection of public safety and public health, helping communities reduce crime, drug use, and overdose while improving access to care and recovery. Bridging public safety, health, and community systems simultaneously, CHJ helps to develop solutions that connect not only law enforcement, courts, and treatment providers, but also community resources. CHJ assists in building community infrastructure and carries change into practice by providing training, action planning, and implementation support.

## PUBLICATIONS & RESEARCH

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Farina, G., Charlier, J., & Fiori, H. (2025). Preventing Substance Use-Related Crime through Deflection. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Human Rights and Science*, 7 (2-8). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15222574>

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